



THE RECTOR AND VISITORS OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

March 5, 2013

Dear Members of the Faculty Senate Executive Council:

It is unfortunate, and disappointing, to see the Faculty Senate react to a newspaper article that the Senate admits may not fully convey the substance or context of the situation.

The University considers the issue at hand a confidential personnel matter. As spokesperson for the Board of Visitors, I follow the laws and procedures around these issues - a tenet I'm sure the Faculty Senate also values. This reality inevitably leads to incomplete or one-sided coverage, making it even more difficult to fairly judge. Still, I trust that our faculty, as a whole, are able to inspire our students to a high level of critical analysis, especially in emotionally charged situations.

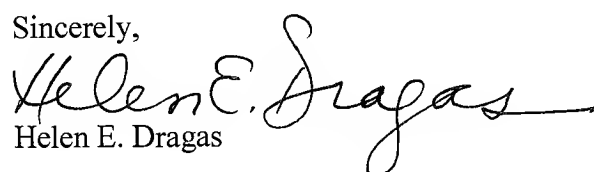
It is also the Rector's role to compile ideas and comments from the Board throughout what can be a sometimes complex and lengthy process. The questions we seek to answer often defy simple or immediate solutions. The issues stretch across numerous disciplines and units, accounting for educational quality as well as critical patient safety and health outcomes.

Numerous conversations and drafts may be required before consensus is reached. We may, as I did at more than one step in this process, ask the entire Board to participate. This deliberative work achieved a result that will support the President, benefit the entire University and provide accountability to the people of the Commonwealth.

As for faculty salaries, I fully supported, as did the entire Board, the goal of advancing salaries to achieve at least a 20th place ranking among our AAU peers. This action expresses our appreciation of the importance of competitive compensation. In fact, by directing that a long-range financial plan be developed, we are working to ensure that we are able to meet expectations and obligations, not only to faculty, but to the students and families of Virginia as well. You will undoubtedly agree that as a public university, they must remain our most important focus.

I echo President Sullivan's public statement on Monday of a steadfast commitment to work together to elevate U.Va. to greater heights of excellence. And I invite you and your Senate colleagues to join with us and to build trust and increase collaboration.

Sincerely,

  
Helen E. Dragas